

## Message Text

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45

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 NIC-01 ACDA-19 AID-20 CU-04 DRC-01 /143 W

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R 151400Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3112

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 4846

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS, PINT, SOCI, NU

SUBJECT: NOVEDADES ATTACKS AGAINST GON OPPONENTS EXPANDED

REF: MANAGUA 4518

1. SUMMARY: DURING THE PAST TWO WEEKS THE SOMOZA-OWNED NOVEDADES HAS EXPANDED ITS OFFENSIVE AGAINST CRITICS OF THE GOVERNMENT. NOW UNDER FIRE IS NATIONAL UNIVERSITY (UNAN) RECTOR CARLOS TUNNERMANN BERNHEIM, FOR SOME TIME REGARDED AS AN AVOWED ENEMY OF GENERAL SOMOZA. SOMETHING OF A DEPARTURE, HOWEVER, IS NOVEDADES' RESTRAINED BUT UNMISTAKABLE ATTACK ON ARCHBISHOP MIGUEL OBANDO Y BRAVO. END SUMMARY.

2. RECTOR TUNNERMANN WAS CHARGED IN NOVEDADES' DECEMBER 4 AND 5 EDITIONS OF CONSPIRING WITH UNIVERSITY STUDENTS TO PROVOKE "DISORDER AND TERROR" DURING THE FINAL GAME OF THE FEMZB WORLD BASEBALL CHAMPIONSHIP. ACCORDING TO NOVEDADES TUNNERMANN WAS ACTING ON EXPRESS INSTRUCTIONS FROM HAVANA TO CARRY OUT THIS  
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"SINISTER PLAN", AND WOULD BE REWARDED WITH AN INVITATION TO GIVE A

SERIES OF CONFERENCES IN CUBAN UNIVERSITIES. NOVEDADES ALSO TIED TUNNERMANN IN WITH THE SACASA-CHAMORRO NATIONAL MOVEMENT AND REPEATED CHARGES THAT THIS "SUBVERSIVE" GROUP WAS ASSOCIATED WITH THE EDMUNDO CHAMORRO RAPPACCIOLI ARM SHIPMENT AND THE FSLN INCIDENT IN NANDAIME. (NOTE: BUNNERMANN DID MEET RECENTLY WITH OPPOSITION LEADERS CHAMORRO, SACASA AND AGUERO.)

3. THE FINAL FEMBA GAME BETWEEN THE NICARAGUAN AND UNITED STATES TEAMS WAS HELD WITHOUT INCIDENT THE NIGHT OF DECEMBER 5 TO AN OVERFLOW CROWD IN THE LEON STADIUM. NOVEDADES CREDITED ITS TIMELY WARNING WITH HAVING ASSURED THE PEACEFUL PROCEEDINGS, AND CONTINUED ITS OFFENSIVE AGAINST UNAN ON DECEMBER 13 CALLING IT A HOTBED OF SUBVERSION.

4. TUNNERMANN REJECTED THE NOVEDADES CHARGES AS LIBELOUS CHALLENGING THE NEWSPAPER TO COME UP WITH PROOF, AND SAID HE WILL DENOUNCE THE ATTACK BEFORE THE SUPERIOR COUNCIL OXRCENTRAL AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES AND THE UNION OF LATIN AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES. UNAN'S BOARD ISSUED A COMMUNIQUE STRONGLY BACKING THE RECTOR, AND LA PRENSA CHOSE THIS OPPORTUNE TIME TO PUBLICIZE TUNNERMANN'S RECEIVING A GRANT FROM THE PRESTIGIOUS GUGGENHIEM FOUNDATION TO WRITE A BOOK ABOUT LATIN AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES AFTER HE RETIRES FROM THE RECTORSHIP EARLY NEXT YEAR.

5. TURNING ITS FIRE ON THE CHURCH, A DECEMBER 12 NOVEDADES EDITORIAL TAKES THE ARCHBISHOP TO TASK FOR MAKING "QUARRELSOME SERMONS AND PRONOUNCEMENTS" WHICH "GIVE AID TO THE ENEMIES OF POLITICAL TRANQUILITY." THIS EDITORIAL -- WRITTEN BY EDGARDO PRADO, CHIEF OF THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS SECTION OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY -- THEN GOES ON TO CRITICIZE THE ARCHBISHOP AND MANAGUA'S PRESBETERIAL COUNCIL FOR THEIR LETTER TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER PROTESTING "UNJUST DISCRIMINATION" AGAINST FOREIGN PRIESTS BY DENYING THEM PERMISSION TO REMAIN IN NICARAGUA. PRADO REMINDS THE ARCHBISHOP THAT ALTHOUGH THE GREAT MAJORITY OF NICARAGUANS ARE CATHOLICS, THE NATION HAS NO OFFICIAL RELIGION AND ALL CITIZENS AND ESPECIALLY FOREIGNERS WHO ARE GUESTS IN THE COUNTRY, "TENSURED OR NOT", ARE SUBJECT TO LAWS PROHIBITING ACTS AGAINST THE SECURITY OF THE STATE. PRADO ASSERTS THAT THE GON WILL CONTINUE TO APPLY THE LAW WITHOUT DISCRIMINATION AGAINST THOSE WHO OPENLY SPREAD SEDITION

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AND INSURGENCY WHETHER FROM THE PULPIT OR ELSEWHERE. ANOTHER NOVEDADES EDITORIAL THE DAY BEFORE ALSO ADDRESSED THE ISSUE OF FOREIGN PRIESTS AND RAISED THE POSSIBILITY OF A CONFRONTATION BETWEEN THE STATE AND THE CHURCH WHICH IS "MANIPULATED BY SUBTLE ANTI-GOVERNMENT HANDS."

6. COMMENT: GON OFFICIALS WERE STUNG BY STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS AGAINST THE GENERALLY POORLY ATTENDED FEMBA GAMES AND OPPOSITION

CHARGES THAT THE SERIES PROVIDED A "/CIRCUS WITHOUT BREAD" (MANAGUA A-74), AND THE ASSAULT AGAINST UNAN AND ITS RECTOR, WITH WHOM GENERAL SOMOZA HAS HAD BITTER DIFFERENCES, IS UNDERSTANDABLE. THE ATTACKS AGAINST THE ARCHBISHOP, COUCHED IN RESTRAINED LANGUAGE THOUGH THEY WERE, ARE UNUSUAL BECAUSE THEY DEPART FROM THE GOVERNMENT SUPPORTIVE MEDIA'S PRACTICE OF ACCORDING THE CHURCH GINGERLY TREATMENT (MANAGUA A-72). MEMBERS OF THE GON INNER CIRCLE HAVE EXPRESSED STRONG RESENTMENT OF THE ARCHBISHOP'S RECENT DECLARATIONS EXPECIALLY HIS CHRISTMAS PASTORAL WHICH WAS WIDELY INTERPRETED TO HAVE ANTI-GOVERNMENT OVERTONES. UNDOUBTEDLY THE ARCHBISHOP'S REPEATED REFUSAL TO PRESIDE OVER AN OPEN AIR MASS CALLED BY GENERAL SOMOZA TO COMMEMORATE THE DECEMBER 23 EARTHQUAKE ADDED FUEL TO THE FEELINGS AGAINST HIM. GON'S REFUSAL TO ALLOW CERTAIN FOREIGN PRIESTS TO REMAIN IN THE COUNTRY IS A LINGERING ISSUE BETWEEN THE GON AND THE CHURCH. THE LETTER TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER MENTIONED ABOVE SPECIFIES ONLY TWO RECENT CASES, BUT THERE HAVE BEEN SIMILAR INCIDENTS IN THE PAST. THE GON THROUGH ITS IMMIGRATION PROCEDURES HAS SOUGHT TO DISCREETLY EASE FOREIGN PRIESTS WHOM IT SUSPECTS OF ANTI-GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES OUT OF NICARAGUA BY REFUSING THEM PERMISSION TO RETURN WHEN THEY LEAVE THE COUNTRY FOR ANY REASON.

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## Message Attributes

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**TAGS:** PINT, SOCI, NU, (RAPPACCIOLI, EDMUNDO CHAMORRO)  
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